

Interim Guidance for Assessing a Person Under Investigation (PUI) for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) (Updated February 28, 2020)

The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) continues to closely monitor the rapidly evolving outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Hospitals, Physicians and other Healthcare providers need to be prepared to evaluate patients with suspected COVID-19. This is a rapidly changing situation and guidance will be updated as needed.

Mississippi Physicians/Providers and Healthcare facilities should be prepared to *Identify* persons at risk for infection, *Isolate* those individuals using appropriate infection control and *Call* MSDH when you suspect COVID-19 at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, weekends and holidays).

IDENTIFY

MSDH recommends asking about travel history to a COVID-19 affected geographic area in the last 14 days.

Patients in Mississippi who meet the following criteria should be evaluated as a PUI (Person under investigation) in association with the outbreak of COVID-19.

1. Fever **OR** symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)
-**AND** in the last 14 days before symptom onset,
 - Any person, including healthcare workers, who had close contact with an ill laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient
2. Fever **AND** signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough, difficulty breathing) requiring hospitalization
-**AND** in the last 14 days before symptom onset,
 - History of travel from an affected geographic area
3. Fever with severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., pneumonia, ARDS) requiring hospitalization and without alternative explanatory diagnosis (e.g., influenza)
-**AND**
 - No source of exposure has been identified

ISOLATE

Immediately place a facemask on the patient with known or suspected COVID-19 (i.e., PUI), and,

- Isolate patient in an Airborne Infection Isolation Room (AIIR). Once in AIIR, the patient's facemask may be removed.
- If an AIIR is not available, keep the facemask on the patient and isolate in a private examination room with the door closed. The patient should be transferred to a facility where an AIIR is available when feasible.

Staff providing care should use standard, contact and airborne precautions with eye protection (gloves, gowns, N 95 mask, goggles or face shield).

CALL

- **Immediately notify MSDH at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, holidays and weekends).**
- MSDH will facilitate appropriate testing for COVID-19 and provide additional guidance. Collection of two specimen types, lower respiratory and upper respiratory, is recommended.

RESOURCES

- CDC Coronavirus COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- MSDH Coronavirus COVID-19: https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420.html
- CDC Information for Healthcare Professionals: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html>
- CDC Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/infection-control.html>
- CDC Resources for Hospitals and Healthcare Professionals Preparing for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/preparedness-checklists.html>
- CDC Interim Guidance for Clinical Specimen Collection: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>